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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 000567

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA, NEA/ARP, NEA/EX, S/CT, CA, DS/DSS,
DS/IP/NEA, DS/DSS/ITA, DS/ICI/PII, CENTCOM FOR POLAD

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [YM](#) [EAC](#) [COUNTER](#) [TERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: SANAA EAC MEETING MARCH 20 2003

REF: A. SANAA 521

[B](#). SANAA 520

Classified By: Ambassador Edmund J. Hull, for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Begin Summary: The Ambassador convened an Emergency Action Committee (EAC) meeting on March 20 to assess threat information in light of developments with the Iraq contingency and further information on the shooting incident at the Hunt Oil facility in Marib (refs a, b and septel). Embassy will move to StandFast posture at the close of business March 20. Key offices and personnel represented at the meeting included: AMB, DCM, POL/ECON, CONS, ADMIN, PD, RSO, ORCA, OMC, SOC YEMEN and RMO.

MOI, PSO and Protection of Americans

[1](#)2. (S/NF) Ambassador, DCM and RSO met with Interior Minister Alimi and Political Security Organization (PSO) Chief Gamish for two hours on March 19 (details reported septel). Gamish said that President Saleh has given PSO/MOI the mission of protecting Americans and close coordination would be key. MOI agreed. Ambassador briefed on Embassy plans for MoveSafe and StandFast postures, which was welcomed by MOI and PSO Chief. Ambassador brought up a number of items, including getting needed ammunition out of customs limbo, obtaining enough civilian (non-diplomatic) license plates for Embassy vehicles, having security provided for the YALI teachers shuttle and noting several Iraq-related issues.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) MOI brought up the following:

- request for name and contact information on all/all Americans in Yemen to facilitate strong protection;
- closure of the road in front of the Embassy;
- assurance that Embassy personnel movements would be minimal and coverage be provided by Yemeni security;
- announcement of a 24-hour ROYG security hotline staffed by English speakers for Amcits with the phone number disseminated via Warden Message and other means;
- request for Americans to avoid known Western gathering places for the time being.

Update on Shootings in Marib

[1](#)2. (S/NF) Embassy investigative team returned from Marib the evening of March 19, and at this stage, there is no information indicating that the tragic incident was anything other than a criminal attack. Investigators have several strong leads to continue their inquiry. A clear picture is emerging of how the slayings occurred; however, the shooter's motive remains unclear. Investigation has yet to uncover any anti-Western or extremist views by the perpetrator. Witnesses confirm that the shooter had sleeping problems and was involved in a family dispute, and he was on several kinds of medication. Contrary to press reports, no evidence confirms allegations that the shooter had been a poor employee or fired at any time. Embassy is providing other assistance as needed. Details reported septel. See paragraph 8 for the March 20 public statement.

Threats, Security and
StandFast 3/20 COB for Iraq Contingency

[1](#)3. (S/NF) ORCA said there was no change to current threat information. EAC members discussed the possibility of demonstrations, particularly after mosque sermons on Friday, March 21, but had no information of planned demonstrations at this time. RSO reported that airport officials indicated that so far only Egyptair would curtail operations.

[1](#)4. (S/NF) EAC members agreed to move the StandFast posture

today (March 20) at close of business as previously planned. FSNs were notified at a DCM-led meeting in the afternoon, where the decision to alter parking access for FSNs was also discussed.

15. (C) RSO reported the guidance on the access of vehicles and personnel (American and FSN) would be disseminated via Administrative Notice. He also said that a room in the Sheraton Hotel had been identified to act as a gathering point for Embassy personnel staying there. The Alternate Command Center is ready and three employees will staff it during StandFast.

Consular and Warden Messages

16. (C) CONS Chief said they were coordinating with all sections on the request from MOI for information on Americans for protective purposes. Per privacy act provisions, CONS is contacting all Americans to get permission for release of information before providing it to the government authorities.

17. (U) A Warden Message will be sent March 20 to announce Embassy closure/StandFast posture and the MOI hotline number, warn about possible demonstrations and give an update on what is known about the Marib incident. It will also advise that the consular section will also be closed during StandFast, except for emergency services.

18. (U) Text of Public Statement on the investigation of the Marib attack follows:

The investigation of the March 18 attack in Marib, in which an American, a Canadian and a Yemeni were killed, is still continuing.

At this time, we are unable to ascertain the motivation behind the attack. However, we have no evidence at this stage that this was anything other than a criminal attack.
HULL